

## Message Text

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12/43

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 USSS-00 DODE-00

CIAE-00 USIE-00 FBIE-00 INRE-00 /031 W

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O 311747Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 2744

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y F O R S I T R E P N O (42 VICE 41)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, ASEC, MX

SUBJ: SITREP NO. 42: PATTERSON KIDNAPPING: MORNING NEWS ROUNDUP,  
MARCH 31.

1. KIDNAPPING OF VICECONSUL JOHN PATTERSON WAS GIVEN LIMITED  
PLAY IN ONLY FOUR MEXICO CITY'S SUNDAY MORNING PAPERS: STORY  
RELEGATED TO INSIDE PAGES AMID INCREASING VERSIONS THAT ENTIRE  
EPISODE MAY BE A HOAX.

2. EL HERALDO RAN THE STORY ON PAGE 13 UNDER HEADLINE:  
"POLICE ASSURE THAT DISAPPEARANCE OF US VICECONSUL IS A SELF-  
KIDNAPPING. MANY TRACES HINT AT THIS". THE LEAD SAYS: "THE  
FEDERAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE YESTERDAY REJECTED THE VERSION  
THAT THE VICECONSUL WAS KIDNAPPED AND ACCEPTED A THEORY THAT  
HIS DISAPPEARANCE IS A CASE OF SELF-KIDNAPPING. "INVESTIGATORS  
BASE THEIR ASSUMPTION ON THE FACT THAT THE WOULD BE KIDNAPPERS  
HAVE NOT ESTABLISHED CONTACT WITH ANN PATTERSON, THE DIPLOMAT'S  
WIFE. THEY ALSO POINT OUT THEY HAVE NOT MADE KNOWN THEIR  
CONDITIONS NOR THE NAME OF THEIR ORGANIZATION. "ANOTHER  
ARGUMENT IN THIS THESIS IS THAT JOHN PATTERSON WAS SEEN  
TWO HOURS AFTER HIS DISAPPEARANCE BY THE GUARD OF THE HOTEL  
ENCANTO--WHERE THE VICECONSUL LIVED SINCE JANUARY. "THE  
HOTEL EMPLOYEE TOLD AGENTS THAT AT THAT MOMENT THE VICECONSUL  
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WAS FRIENDLY CHATTING WITH AN UNIDENTIFIED PERSON INSIDE A

VEHICLE, TRAVELING AT 20 KILOMETERS PER HOUR. "ALSO, THE DFS SAID THAT THE PAPER OF THE RANSOM LETTER IS FROM A BLOCK USED AT THE CONSULATE GENERAL AND THAT THE WRITING, FIRM AND WITHOUT PRESSURES, IS THAT OF JOHN PATTERSON. "IT WAS ADDED THAT THE RANSOM LETTER SAYS THAT THE MONEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN LEFT AT THE EL DORADO MOTEL ABOUT 20 METERS FROM THE US BORDER AT NOGALES, SONORA. "ACCORDING TO ANOTHER OFFICIAL OF THE FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE, THE AMERICAN DIPLOMAT IS EXPECTED TO RETURN NO LATER THAN MONDAY, ALTHOUGH HE WAS UNABLE TO GIVE ADDITIONAL DETAILS. "LOCAL DAILIES PUBLISHED ADS YESTERDAY IN WHICH THE US CONSULATE HERE ASKED THE PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RANSOM NOTE TO MAKE CONTACT".

3. EL UNIVERSAL SAID ON PAGE 4 "ALL FUMBLES IN PATTERSON'S CASE". THE STORY NOTES THAT A PRESS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY AT 5 P.M. AT THE CONSULATE GENERAL IN HERMOSILLO WAS CANCELLED AND THAT UNCONFIRMED VERSIONS SAY IT WAS CANCELLED AT THE REQUEST OF THE KIDNAPPERS..." STORY FURTHER STATES POLICE ARE "TOTALLY CONFUSED" BY THIS CASE AND THAT PUBLIC OPINION IS DEMANDING AUTHORITIES TO SOLVE IT..."

4. EXCELSIOR PLAYED THE STORY ON PAGE 22 SAYING "CONSUL'S KIDNAPPING WORK OF COMMON CRIMINALS: JUDICIAL POLICE"--SEEKING ECONOMIC BENEFITS. "THE KIDNAPPING OF AMERICAN VICECONSUL JOHN PATTERSON WAS NOT CARRIED OUT BY ANY SUBVERSIVE GROUP BUT BY COMMON CRIMINALS AND EVEN THE POSSIBILITY OF A SELF-KIDNAPPING IS NOT RULED OUT, FRANCISCO SAHAGUN BACA, COMMANDER OF THE FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE SAID TODAY. COMMANDER SAHAGUN RECOUNTS POINTS EMPHASIZED IN OTHER STORIES BUT WITH ADDITIONAL OBSERVATION THAT A "GUERRILLA" WOULD NOT BE INTERESTED IN GETTING CAUGHT ON THE AMERICAN SIDE OF THE BORDER WHEN HE HAS THE GREAT ADVANTAGE OF THE SIERRA--RELATING TO THE PAYMENT OF RANSOM AT THE EL DORADO MOTEL AT NOGALES". FURTHER COVERAGE SAHAGUN COMMENTS TO FOLLOW IN SEPTTEL.

5. NOVEDADES RAN BRIEF ARTICLE IN ITS SOCIALS SECTION UNDER PROTOCOL HEADING SAYING THAT THE CONSULAR CORPS IN MEXICO EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF VICE CONSUL JOHN PATTERSON AND OFFERS ITS ASSISTANCE TO CONFIDENTIAL

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THE SOLUTION OF THE CASE.

6. EL HERALDO QUOTES FONSEC RABASA (IN HABANA) RESPONDING TO A QUERY ON TERRORISM IN MEXICO AS CITING THE PATTERSON KIDNAPPING AND THE RELATED DEMAND FOR \$500,000 RANSOM. HE COMMENTED IN GENERAL TERMS ON TERRORISM, SAYING -THERE ARE ALWAYS FANATICS AND DELINQUENTS". RABASA DID NOT RAISE ANY QUESTION AS TO THE BONA FIDES OF THE PATTERSON KIDNAPPING.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** KIDNAPPING, PRESS COMMENTS, PARAMILITARY FORCES, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL, POLICE INVESTIGATIONS, FRAUDS, EXTORTION, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 31 MAR 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974MEXICO02744  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740071-0293, D740071-0395  
**From:** MEXICO  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t1974031/aaaaaace.tel  
**Line Count:** 116  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 17 SEP 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <17 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <24-Sep-2002 by MorefiRH>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SITREP NO. 41: PATTERSON KIDNAPPING: MORNING NEWS ROUNDUP, MARCH 31.  
**TAGS:** PINR, ASEC, MX, US, (PATTERSON, JOHN)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005